



With Jesus Christ as our inspiration and guide, we are called to provide high-quality Catholic education in the Diocese of Bathurst'

EXCURSIONS POLICY

1. MISSION AND VALUES

In partnership with the family, parish and community, our schools nurture a relationship with Jesus, celebrate and share the Catholic faith, and educate to enable all to make a positive contribution to the world.

We are therefore committed to:

- The provision of a safe, inclusive and professional learning environment
- The use of a variety of methods, technologies and techniques to enhance learning and teaching
- The implementation of a challenging, rigorous and engaging curriculum
- Recognition of the diverse needs of learners.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the agreed practices at Catholic Education Diocese of Bathurst (CEDB) in relation to Excursions undertaken by schools in the diocese.

Catholic Education Diocese of Bathurst recognises that education in the classroom and schools can be supplemented to enrich, enhance and enhance student learning through structured education away from the school.

All excursions must be curriculum based, student focused, and planned to optimise learning opportunities. Excursions that are not curriculum based should not be undertaken.

Educational excursions can be highly beneficial to student learning, but can interrupt normal learning routines and place additional financial pressure on parents. Students are not to be disadvantaged because of financial requirements of excursions.

3. EXPECTATIONS

It is expected that all staff, community and students at CEDB and in CEDB schools will adhere to the scope and procedures outlined in this document as these are the agreed practices of CEDB.

It is expected that schools will develop and clarify their school specific practices related to excursions.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that all excursions:

- are curriculum based and designed to enhance learning opportunities for the students
- have an excursion co-ordinator who assumes responsibility for planning the excursion
- are inclusive so no student is disadvantaged, especially because of disability, financial hardship or additional needs requirements

The Excursion Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the excursion:

- has been thoroughly prepared in line with the school's specific processes for excursions
- is fully costed
- has had complete and thorough risk assessments completed for all aspects of the excursion
- has a minimum of 1 teacher accompanying each excursion.

4. DEFINITIONS

Excursion

An excursion is a school organised learning experience that takes place away from the school premises.

Incursion

An incursion is a school organised learning experience that takes place on the school premises. This often involves an external individual or organisation bringing learning experiences to the students in their school.

Workplace

Under Workplace Health and Safety legislation a **workplace** includes both school and out of school environments. This means that a school's duty to provide a safe place of work for its employees, volunteers and students exists not only at school but extends to excursions away from the school premises.

5. GUIDELINES

Educational purpose

All excursions must have an explicit link to the curriculum and outcomes being developed. They must take account of the needs and resources of the school and families, and the impact on the continuity of regular teaching and learning programs for participating teachers and students. Such activities may interrupt regular learning routines of students.

Communication

Parents or caregivers must be informed in writing of the details of any excursion, including details of all planned activities, their educational value and curriculum links, methods of transport, costs and level of supervision.

Parents or caregivers must be provided with details of specific activities to be undertaken if they involve overnight excursions, swimming/water activities, or activities which fit into Level 2 - Activities requiring Specialist Instructors (see Appendix 4).

Consent for Excursions

Parents or caregivers must give permission for students to participate in excursions. This is usually by means of a signed form and would include information related to the students medical details, medication administration permission and emergency contact numbers. The consent form should also provide consent for staff to use their best judgement in obtaining emergency care (see Appendix 3).

Inclusivity, Adjustments and Exclusion

Excursions are inclusive activities, where all students in the specific learning group are to be given the opportunity to participate fully. Appendix 6 details information regarding inclusion, adjustments and exclusions from excursions.

Duty of care

A duty of care is owed to students in the school environment and while on excursions. The duty of care owed to students applies whether the school excursion is held during school hours, after school, on the weekend or during school holidays. Excursion planning must take account of staff health and safety issues in addition to those of the students attending.

An appropriately equipped first aid kit must be taken on all excursions and it must include asthma medication and spacer, and a general use adrenaline auto injector (i.e. EpiPen®). As a minimum, one school

staff attending the excursion are required to have current First-Aid training and anaphylaxis training. Any excursion involving swimming or water activities and any excursion involving overnight stays, must also include a member of staff who possesses current accreditation in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Staff planning excursions involving students with health care needs or diagnosed medical conditions that may require an emergency response, must consider issues such as administration of prescribed and emergency medication, health care procedures and emergency response plans.

Staff planning excursions involving students with disabilities or special learning needs or behavioural needs that may impact on overall management of the student's health condition on the excursion, must also consider additional requirements that may need to be in place for the excursion.

Parents and Volunteers

The duty of care owed to students during an excursion cannot be delegated from the school to parents, caregivers, volunteers or other individuals. Teachers retain the ultimate responsibility for supervision.

Parents or caregivers will frequently volunteer to assist with excursions. The principal must be satisfied that there are sufficient teachers to maintain adequate control of the whole excursion. If possible parents, caregivers and volunteers who assist on excursions should not have to pay to attend.

Parents, caregivers and volunteers must be appropriately briefed on safety, behaviour measures and specific student health conditions that may require an emergency response, prior to the excursion. The student and parent must be advised that this is being done.

Principals must ensure that all people accompanying school excursions complete and that the school has verified prior to the excursion, a Working with Children Check – Declaration for Volunteers. Volunteers are not to accompany the excursion if they refuse to complete the WWCC - Volunteers prior to the excursion.

Risk Assessment and Risk Management

A thorough risk assessment is to be conducted and a risk management plan developed before approval can be given for any excursion. Risk Assessment and Risk Management ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of students, staff and volunteers. (see Appendix 2)

Risk assessments undertaken will depend on the nature of the excursion, the age of the students attending, the number of students involved, the location of the excursion, the excursion activities and the needs of individuals attending. A visit to the proposed excursion site is recommended, especially when unfamiliar or potentially high risk activities are contemplated. In these circumstances the pre-excursion visit should address issues such as access, communication, injury prevention and emergency evacuation.

Risk management will depend upon the adjustments and mitigations required to address any identified risks and ensure a safe learning experience for all students attending the excursion.

Transport

Schools often need to organise transport for students and staff to local events/excursion venues and in emergency situations. A school's duty of care requires that every precaution must be taken to ensure the safety of students/staff/volunteers. Risk assessments need to be undertaken for all stages of the journey including transport undertaken. (see Appendix 5)

Teacher to student ratios

The number of teachers to accompany the students for each excursion is to be determined by the principal and should take into account factors such as the age of the students, their maturity, the location of the excursion, specific needs of students and the nature of the activities to be undertaken. Aquatic activities have specific teacher/instructor to student ratios. There must be sufficient numbers of appropriate, responsible adults, including support teachers and school assistants, to ensure thorough and adequate supervision. Other adults assisting with the excursion may include parents, volunteers, specialist instructors and/or venue staff.

6. PROCEDURES

Approving the excursion

Excursions must be planned well in advance to meet the curriculum outcomes and minimise disruption to the education process and school functioning.

1. Risk Assessments must be undertaken for all aspects of the excursion and adjustments planned accordingly.
2. Staffing must be planned for the excursion which takes into account the ratio of students:teachers, male/female staff, students with specific needs, and those with first aid or specialist training.
3. An excursion timeframe is planned which is least disruptive to student learning and the school calendar.
4. Timetable for the excursion, quotes and costings are prepared.
5. Parents are consulted regarding students with special needs, or additional needs, or disability, or where concern is raised regarding their ability to cope with the excursion or behave in a manner which ensures safety for themselves and others.
6. Approval is sought from the principal for the excursion.

Planning the excursion

If the Principal approves the excursion then the planning can proceed

7. Transport, venues and accommodation booked and deposits paid
8. Parents notified of excursion - outline of activities, transport, costs, specifics.
9. Consent forms distributed and returned.
10. Costs paid by students/families/school
11. WWCC - Volunteers, provided to the school for verification (if applicable)
12. Attendance roll prepared.
13. Emergency information prepared including contact numbers, medical forms, risk assessments
14. First Aid kit checked and ready for the excursion.
15. Staff allocated roles for the excursion and given information and preparation required.
16. Students prepared with any information they require.

During the excursion

17. Attendance Roll marked at the start of day and during day (as applicable).
18. Risks continually assessed to maintain safety of all on the excursion.
19. Excursion proceeds with the goal of achieving the learning/curriculum outcomes.

After the excursion

20. Issues, incidents and accidents reported to the Principal as soon as practicable.
21. Documentation retained of any issues, incidents or accidents which occurred.
22. All invoices paid.

7. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Water Safety Notice 15 2017 NSW Local Government

8. RELATED POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Child Safe Policy Catholic Education Diocese of Bathurst

Child Related Employment (WWCC) Policy Catholic Education Diocese of Bathurst

Code of Conduct for Employees Catholic Education Diocese of Bathurst

Critical Incident Management Policy Catholic Education Diocese of Bathurst

Excursions Risk Management Guide Catholic Church Insurances

First Aid Policy Catholic Education Diocese of Bathurst
Guidelines for Professional Conduct in the Protection of Children and Young People
Guidelines for the Safe Conduct of Sport and Physical Activity in Schools DET NSW Water Safety
Guidelines for Unstructured Aquatic Activity DET NSW, RLSA
Risk Assessment for Students with Challenging Behaviours Guidelines Catholic Education Diocese of Bathurst
Workplace Health and Safety Policy Catholic Education Diocese of Bathurst

9. POLICY ADMINISTRATION

This policy has been ratified by the Executive Director of Schools and will be reviewed periodically, or in the event of any information or incident that indicates the need for a review, or following relevant legislative or organisational change.

It is the responsibility of anyone accessing this document to ensure that the current version is downloaded from CEDB website.

Date of Implementation	2009
Date of Last Review	2019
Date for Next Review	2025
Responsible for Review	Leader HR, WHS, Risk and Legal

Appendix

- Appendix 1 Excursion Application Form (Sample)
- Appendix 2 Risk Assessment Form (Sample)
- Appendix 3 Consent Form (Sample)
- Appendix 4 Activity Categories
- Appendix 5 Transport for Excursions
- Appendix 6 Inclusion, Adjustments And Exclusions
- Appendix 7 Walking Excursions and Extended Bushwalks
- Appendix 8 Excursions and Water Activities
- Appendix 9 Overnight Excursions
- Appendix 10 Overseas Excursions

Appendix 1 Excursion Application Form (Sample)

This form is to be completed in preparation for an Excursion to gain the permission of the Principal

Excursion Planner

Part A - Rationale and Date Claimer	
Name of Excursion	
Teacher proposing excursion (supervisor)	
Educational Outcomes addressed by the Excursion	
Curriculum content addressed by the Excursion How this fits with the teaching program	
Students/classes involved	
Proposed date of excursion	
Excursion to	
Number of Days/Hours of excursion	
Additional Comments from the Teacher	
Overall Cost per student	<input type="checkbox"/> Excursion < \$50 (5 weeks ahead of proposed date) <input type="checkbox"/> Excursion \$50 - \$100 (7 weeks ahead of proposed date) <input type="checkbox"/> Excursion > \$100 (10 weeks ahead of proposed date)
Principal Permission	<input type="checkbox"/> Permission to proceed with excursion <input type="checkbox"/> Please address items in comments box below <input type="checkbox"/> Excursion not to proceed
Principal Signature Date approved to proceed	_____ _____
Principal Comments/notes/items to address	

Part B - Specific Excursion Information			
	Teacher proposing excursion (supervisor)		
	Students/Classes involved		
	Number of students to attend		
	Proposed Date(s)		
V E N U E S	Venue 1	Place name	
		Contact name	Contact number
	Venue 2	Place name	
		Contact name	Contact number
	Venue 3	Place name	
		Contact name	Contact number
	For further venues attach a separate sheet		
S U P E R V I S O R S	Supervisor to Student ratio	_____ : _____	
	Supervisor 1	Name	CPR/First Aid <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Approved to attend <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
	Supervisor 2	Name	CPR/First Aid <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Approved to attend <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
	Supervisor 3	Name	CPR/First Aid <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Approved to attend <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
	Supervisor 4	Name	CPR/First Aid <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Approved to attend <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
For further supervisors attach a separate sheet			
T R A N S	Transport Form	<input type="checkbox"/> Bus Bus Company Name _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Ferry <input type="checkbox"/> Train <input type="checkbox"/> Private car <input type="checkbox"/> Plane
	Car Driver 1	Name	Rego No Licence No WWCC provided <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N

P O R T	Car Driver 2	Name	Rego No Licence No WWCC provided <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
	Car Driver 3	Name	Rego No Licence No WWCC provided <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
	Car Driver 4	Name	Rego No Licence No WWCC provided <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
	For further scar drivers attach a separate sheet		
B U D G E T		Total EXPENSES	Total INCOME
	Entry Costs		
	Transport Costs		
	Food/Drink Costs		
	Accommodation Costs		
	Other _____		
	Other _____		
	Other _____		
	TOTAL COST		
	Total per student	_____ X _____ X 10% =	
D O C S	Draft Letter attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
	Risk Assessments attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
	Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
	Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

Part C - Excursion Booking	
<input type="checkbox"/> Notify School Office, add to school calendar	<input type="checkbox"/> Book transport, venues, food
<input type="checkbox"/> Notify parents via letter and newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> Medication documented, plan implemented
<input type="checkbox"/> List of students, supervisors, emergency contacts	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Plan documented, shared
<input type="checkbox"/> Permission from all parents collected and stored	<input type="checkbox"/> Risks mitigated as per Risk Assessments

Appendix 2 Risk Assessment Form (Sample)

Risk Assessment Form			
Excursion Name Date of Proposed Excursion			
Person Undertaking Risk Assessment Date of Risk Assessment			
Hazard	Risk Yes/No	Risk Rating	Controls to implement
<u>Transport Risk Assessment</u> Is the transport accessible to all students? Are there safety measures installed? Have insurances and licences been sighted?			
<u>Venue Risk Assessment</u> Is the site accessible to all students? Are there safety measures installed? Is it free of ground and overhead hazards? Are there risks with equipment at the venue? Are there risks with animals at the venue? Is Personal Protective Equipment required? Is student preparation required? Are additional supervisors required? Is added training required for supervisors?			
<u>Communication Risk Assessment</u> Is communication available at the venue? Are mobile phones in range at the venue? Are other communication forms required?			
<u>Health and Safety Risk Assessment</u> Is a staff member attending with First Aid and CPR training? Is a student attending who needs medication? What medication? Who will supervise medication? Is a student attending who needs additional support? What additional support? Who will provide additional support?			
<u>Emergency Risk Assessment</u> Is an emergency plan in place? Is it known to staff, volunteers and students?			
<u>Specific Risk Assessment</u> Is Risk Assessment needed in relation to Bush Walking? Water Activities? Sport Activities? Outdoor exposure? Camping? Overnight excursion? Overseas Excursion?			

<u>Other Risks Identified and Assessed</u>			

	Consequences How severe could the consequences be?		
Frequency/probability How likely is it to happen?	Death or Disability 1	Lost Time via Injury 2	First Aid required 3
Extremely High - Very Likely to happen	High	High	Medium
High - Likely to happen	High	High	Medium
Medium - May happen sometime	Medium	Medium	Low
Low - Unlikely to happen	Medium	Low	Low

Assessor's Signature _____
Date _____

Assessor's Comments

Appendix 3 Excursion Consent Form (Sample)

Excursion Information	
Excursion Title	
Excursion Date	
Time Departing School	
Time Returning School	
Relevant KLA/Content areas	
Excursion Details	
Excursion Coordinator	
Staff Attending	
Venue	
Transport methods	
Cost	
Clothing required	
Food/Drink required	
Consent due to school	

Excursion Consent	
I give Consent for my child _____	Class _____
to participate in (Excursion Title)	
on (date)	
to (venue)	
Parent Name	
Mobile contact number	
I understand I will be required to pay \$ _____ costs for this excursion by _____	
Student allergies	
Student Medications	
I authorise staff to obtain medical, dental, ambulance or anaesthetic attention if it is deemed necessary and a parent/carer cannot be contacted.	
I understand that unacceptable behaviour may lead to my child's exclusion from the excursion	
Signed _____	Date _____

Appendix 4 Activity Categories

Note: Level 1 Activities are not allowed for school excursions

Level 1 Banned Activities	Level 2 Activities requiring specialist instructors	Level 3 Activities for general use with supervision
Boxing	Abseiling	Athletics
Bungy Jumping	Archery	Australian Rules
Break Dancing	Bush Walking - overnight	Badminton
Hang Gliding	Kayaking/Canoeing in placid water	Baseball/Softball
Kayaking/Canoeing in white water	Diving	Basketball
Mountain Bike riding in rugged terrain	Fencing	Bush Walking, day
Outdoor Rock Climbing	Horse Riding/Equestrian	Cricket
Quad biking	Ice Skating	Cross Country Running
Rock Fishing	Indoor Rock Climbing	Golf
Rodeo	Martial Arts	Hockey
Scuba Diving	Mountain Biking in gentle terrain	Netball
Tobogganing	Orienteering	Rugby League
Weight Lifting	Rope Climbing Courses	Rugby Union
	Rowing	Soccer
	Sailing/Sailboarding	Swimming - still water
	Skating	Tennis
	Snorkelling	Touch Football
	Snow Sports	Triathlon
	Surf Boarding or Surf Swimming	Volleyball
	Trampolining	
	Wave Ski and Body Boarding	
	Weight Training	

Appendix 5 Transport for Excursions

Walking Excursions

In some circumstances, after risk assessment, it may be deemed appropriate for students and their supervisors to walk to and from an excursion venue. In these instances risk assessment must include:

- distance to walk to the venue and age of students
- traffic on roads/ available footpaths/ pedestrian crossings/ traffic lights available
- students with disabilities or mobility needs.

Bus and train and ferry travel

When hiring buses or coaches, schools must:

- hire vehicles with seat belts, which must be worn
- not exceed the number of passengers that the vehicle is licensed to carry.

School owned bus or minibus hire with a staff member as the driver must comply with the above conditions and:

- a teacher who has a bus driver's licence cannot be directed to drive a school bus or a hired bus
- if a teacher is prepared to drive a bus with students, they should not be required to provide supervision of the students during transport
- the teacher's bus driver's licence must be sighted and kept on file
- the bus must be fully licensed, insured and roadworthy.

When organising an excursion by rail or ferry, schools should

- contact the local railway station or ferry station for assistance with excursion concessions and other arrangements including excursion accessible transport for disabled students.

Car travel

The transporting of students in cars of staff members, parents, caregivers, volunteers and other students is not recommended and should only occur in circumstances where there is no feasible alternative transportation. This may only occur under the following conditions:

- a) written permission from the parent or caregiver of the student being transported is obtained
- b) the driver is licensed and, if issued with a provisional licence, complies with any relevant peer passenger conditions
- c) the vehicle is registered and insured
- d) the number of passengers in the vehicle does not exceed the number of seatbelts
- e) current driver's licence, car registration details and car insurance are sighted by the school prior to students being transported in the vehicle. All parents, caregivers or volunteers who transport students in cars must provide a complete Working with Children Check - Volunteers, prior to the excursion.
- f) a designated route is communicated to the driver and a mobile phone is available for contacting the driver
- g) information is communicated to the driver regarding the course of action to be undertaken if inappropriate student behaviour arises, or unexpected medical events or emergencies.

Teachers can be requested but cannot be directed to transport students using a private vehicle.

When using cars to transport students, Child Protection precautions must be fully implemented including WWCC and the teacher, parent or volunteer should never transport one student only. If a parent is transporting one student only, then that student must be their own child.

Transport of Individual Students

In the event of a student being in need of emergency transport the supervising teacher should:

1. Inform the principal of the situation
2. Contact the parent or emergency contact to collect the student
3. Wait with the student until the parent or emergency contact arrives
4. If the parent or emergency contact is unable to collect the student within a reasonable period, make other arrangements with the parent or emergency contact and inform the principal of the

arrangements.

In the event of either the parent or the emergency contact is uncontactable or unable to assist, the teacher should:

1. inform the principal and seek advice on a course of action
2. if the principal is unavailable, use their and/or colleagues professional judgment, to develop an appropriate course of action
3. follow the course of action developed
4. document the course of action taken
5. contact the parent the next day and seek parental support to avoid repetition of the situation
6. inform the principal of the decision, actions undertaken, and communication with the parent.

Air travel

Principals may approve air travel in Australia. (see Travel and Accommodation Policy and CEDB Delegations Schedule)

Appendix 6 Inclusion, Adjustments And Exclusions

Excursions should be inclusive of all students in the cohort. Those students with disabilities, special learning needs, behavioural needs or medical conditions must be considered when excursions are planned so they can achieve education 'on the same basis' as other students.

All students should have the opportunity to participate in an excursion. Costs should be minimised to ensure that there is no undue financial burden imposed upon individual students or their families. Where financial hardship inhibits a student's participation, schools must endeavour to provide financial assistance.

All students with disabilities, or special learning needs, or behavioural needs, or medical conditions should have the opportunity to participate. The support needs of students with disabilities, or special learning needs, or medical conditions require careful consideration and consultation with parents and caregivers.

Consideration must be given to:

- making reasonable adjustments to enable a student with a disability, learning need, behavioural need or medical condition to participate in an excursion
- modification of the excursion to accommodate the needs of students
- consulting parents or caregivers as to the students needs in relation to the excursion
- appropriate or additional support for these students so they can access the learning experiences
- individual health care plan reviews prior to excursions to confirm that any necessary planning and emergency arrangements are in place, including parents having been consulted
- students from language backgrounds other than English, and how parents and caregivers should be informed of the educational value of the excursion and excursion information.

Where a student cannot participate in an excursion, alternate activities must be available that provide for similar learning outcomes, particularly where an assessment task relates to the excursion.

Exclusion of students

A student may be excluded from an excursion if their attendance jeopardises their safety or the safety of others and no suitable adjustments can be made to accommodate the student's needs. Prior to making the decision to exclude a student from an excursion:

- thorough risk assessments must be undertaken for the student and the excursion
- consultation with their parent or caregiver must be undertaken and avenues explored to accommodate the student
- consultation may be held with the student
- discussion must be held with the Principal for a final decision to be made.

After due processes have been undertaken a Principal may decide that the excursion is not able to safely accommodate the needs of the individual student, and they may be excluded from the excursion. It is essential that documentation and communications are filed regarding this process and the decisions.

Excluded students are to be provided with alternate activities that provide for similar learning outcomes, particularly where an assessment task relates to the excursion.

Exclusion of staff or volunteers

Staff or volunteers may on a rare occasion, be excluded from an excursion or part of an excursion, if their attendance jeopardises their safety or health, or the safety of others. (eg a staff member with a pre-existing knee condition should not participate in a bushwalk but may attend and participate in other activities)

Prior to making the decision to exclude a staff member or volunteer from an excursion:

- consultation may be held with the staff member or volunteer
- a Medical Certificate may be required to verify the staff member's ability to undertake the activity
- discussion must be held with the Principal for a final decision to be made
- CEDB HR department should be consulted regarding the staff member attending or attending with limited duties.

Appendix 7 Walking Excursions and Extended Bushwalks

Introduction

Schools may engage in walking excursions or bushwalking as part of excursions, environmental education, sport or adventure programs. Bushwalking is a hiking activity undertaken in bushland settings, using trails or tracks, or in trackless areas which are usually more remote.

Many bushwalking activities, especially with younger students, are of the 'nature walk' type of excursion and these:

- are of low demand on participants
- use defined tracks
- rarely involve the excursion being more than one hour away from transport and communication
- are for a day or part of a day

More challenging bushwalks, referred to as '*extended walks*', can be for one day, overnight or multi-day activities and may involve camping or accommodation.

Students

For all bushwalks, parents must be informed of:

- full details of the location of the bushwalk
- supervision to be provided
- activities to be undertaken
- degree of difficulty of the walk
- the emergency communication system and any other procedures
- cost and intended departure and return times
- specific conditions eg clothing or footwear required. Open footwear when walking is **not appropriate** and may preclude a student from participating.

For day walks, students should be prepared with:

- a backpack to carry their equipment and allows hands to be free for walking and activities
- appropriate food for the walk
- enough water for the walk
- broad brimmed hat or Foreign Legion-style cap
- medication as may be required, esp asthma puffers and auto-immune injectors
- sun protection cream (eg SPF 15-30+ broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen)
- insect repellent
- a waterproof rain jacket with a hood
- suitable footwear
- appropriate clothing to the conditions. Where cold and wet conditions are possible, cotton clothing such as jeans, T-shirts and sweatshirts provide **inadequate** protection. Only woollen or thermal synthetic garments provide warmth. Shorts are better than long trousers for bushwalking except in off-trail and scratchy environments.

For extended walks, students should be prepared with:

- items listed above and also
- a change of clothes in a waterproof bag

For extended walks, students should be instructed in:

- use of camping equipment
- food preparation in a camp kitchen
- personal hygiene in the bush
- navigating and route planning
- safety practices and buddy systems
- first aid
- camp craft
- care of the environment

Supervision

The supervisor or instructor must be an experienced bushwalker with current knowledge of the proposed route including the grading of the walk and possible difficulties which may be encountered. Bushwalking should avoid extreme weather conditions, including hot, cold, wet and periods of fire ban.

For all bushwalks at least two adult supervisors must accompany students. As a guide it is recommended that for day walks the adult supervisor to student ratio not exceed 1:15. For extended walks the recommended ratio is 1:10. Ratios should take into account such factors as age, experience, maturity of the students, environmental conditions, difficulty of the terrain, and challenges likely to be encountered, as well as the experience of the adult supervisors. Where male and female students participate the principal should attempt to have both a male and female adult accompany the group.

Parties should not be split except in emergency situations or when teaching of a particular skill requires it.

Walking pace should be restricted to that of the slowest member while:

- a supervisor should be with students at the front of the walking party
- a supervisor should remain at the rear to provide supervision and support for slower walkers
- regular checks must be made on group numbers
- contact between all supervising adults is maintained.

For day walks the teacher in charge must have:

- experience in supervising students in the specific environment
- first aid training (or another adult with first aid training)

For extended walks the teacher in charge must have:

- proven experience of bushwalking including verification of their experience (e.g, by logbook or testimonial)
- experience in camping
- proficiency in the use of map and compass
- knowledge of search, rescue and emergency procedures
- documented risk assessment which indicates any actions that are being taken to minimise or reduce risks and hazards.

On overnight walks supervisory and accommodation arrangements are to be such that:

- no staff member is placed in a position where there is potential for allegations of improper conduct to be made. In particular, sleeping arrangements should not place any adults in a situation where the propriety of their behaviour could be questioned.
- sleeping and supervisory arrangements are to ensure that no student is placed in a situation where there is the likelihood of sexual contact between students.

Equipment

On extended walks specific items need to be taken with a ratio of 4-7 students to a kit. Students must know how to effectively use these items. A kit would include

- a map (either topographical or an accurate sketch map)
- a written plan
- whistles and compasses
- mobile phone, but leaders should allow for the fact that they may not operate in all locales
- a well-equipped medical kit.

On overnight walks two kits should be carried plus

- comfortable well-fitting rucksack
- warm sleeping bag
- suitable portable tent with sewn-in floor or waterproof ground sheet
- fire starting equipment
- cooking and eating utensils
- food, including supplementary energy foods for emergencies

- water – at least one litre per person per day (consider taking water purifying tablets)
- a stove with fuel (in some areas)
- waterproof pack liner (e.g. a strong garbage bag)
- metal mirror (to use for signalling if lost)
- torch
- plastic bag for carrying rubbish
- small plastic trowel for burying faeces.

The supervisor must ensure:

- the loaded pack does not exceed 1/4 of the body weight of the hiker
- the pack is to be correctly fitted to suit the student's body structure
- sharing equipment amongst the group maintains this limit
- instruction is provided on how to organise belongings in the pack so it maximises the hiker's centre of gravity and comfort.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that all students are adequately equipped and that all equipment is in good order prior to departure. If at the time of departure, a student is not adequately equipped, the supervisor must decide whether there is a safety issue which would preclude the student's participation.

Venues

Locations should be carefully selected to fulfil the requirements of the excursion or bushwalk. In all cases the appropriate prior permission must be obtained to use the land. The supervisor must have current knowledge of the area to be used and be certain of its suitability for the excursion aims and the students.

Selection of venues must take into account:

- the age, fitness and medical condition of the students
- known hazards, such as river crossings, slippery rocks, cliff faces, exposed areas and limited access to roads and communication
- impact on the specific environment and on other users of the venue
- bush fire or flood risks

Parties of inexperienced or young students should remain on recognised walking tracks.

For conservation reasons walking party size should be no more than 10 for adventurous off-track walking or walks in wilderness areas.

Students should be briefed beforehand on nature conservation issues and the need to protect all flora and fauna. In addition, prior to commencement of any extended walk students must be briefed on the actions to be followed in the event of a bushfire, flood, storm and lightning and serious injury to a walker.

In some programs (eg Duke of Edinburgh Award) certain activities are undertaken by secondary students which will confirm their competence to satisfy advanced awards. Expeditions undertaken to achieve these awards will require students to complete aspects with considerable independence. Teachers overseeing these activities will encourage the students to develop self reliance without jeopardising their safety. The organisation's guidelines must be implemented. Supervising teachers are to ensure that regular contact is made with the students. As well, students should be able to contact the supervising teacher as needed.

Safety

Excursions and bushwalks need to be thoroughly planned. Students must be fully briefed in regard to safety issues and emergency procedures. The group leaders should carry a card detailing the procedures to follow in emergencies, including contact numbers. All party members must know how to implement these procedures.

At least one teacher must have recognised training in emergency care and/or First Aid.

For groups involved in overnight stays at least one accompanying teacher must also possess recognised current training in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.

For extended walks all participants should have completed basic first aid training including treatment for cuts, sprains, heat stroke, hypothermia, snake bite, and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.

For all walks, trip details (including numbers and names of the group) must be left with a responsible adult. This person must contact the principal and the police if the group has not returned, or a message has not been received, within a designated time frame. Five (5) hours is the maximum additional period. For an afternoon or short outing, a two (2) hour additional period should trigger a response to the principal and police.

Appendix 8 Excursions involving Water Activities

Bathurst Diocesan systemic schools follow the guidelines developed by [DET NSW](#) and [Royal Life Saving](#). This appendix must be read in conjunction with these guidelines.

Risk Assessment

A thorough venue risk assessment must be completed before any swimming or water activity is allowed. This includes pools and open waterways such as creeks, dams, beaches or rivers. The risk assessment must include :

- layout, including entry, exits, shade spaces, toilets, changerooms, and first aid facilities
- rules, regulations and emergency procedures for the specific location
- water depth and submerged objects in waterways
- school staff/volunteers including those with qualifications and responsible for safety checklists, aquatic activities, first aid, change room supervision and non-swimmers at the venue
- venue staff including those with qualifications and responsible for maintenance, security, water rescue and resuscitation for the venue
- appropriate activities and activity areas including spaces planned and supervised for non-proficient or non-swimmers
- other information resulting from the risk assessment

Staff to Student Ratios are based upon Austswim Guidelines

- Beginner: 1 teacher to 10 students
- Intermediate: 1 teacher to 12 students
- Advanced: 1 teacher to 15 students

Students

All students participating in swimming or a water activity must:

- complete the Water Survival Challenge to be classified as “proficient” or “non-proficient”. This must be done prior to the excursion.
- have their proficiency level documented and retained by the school
- wear the blue (proficient) or yellow (non-proficient) wrist band until they exit the swimming venue.

Students not participating in the water activity must be supervised in an area away from the water.

School Staff induction must be undertaken by the coordinator of the water activity and should include information from the risk assessment and specific to the water area and activity for the day.

Water Safety Qualifications

As water activities have heightened risks, it is expected that risk assessments will identify the qualifications and skills required for supervisors of the excursion. These will include individuals who have first aid, resuscitation, water rescue, Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety qualifications.

Parent or Guardian Information and Consent Form

It is essential that parents or guardians be provided with full details of excursions, especially those involving swimming and water activities, before such excursions are undertaken. In particular, they are to be informed of:

- details about any swimming and water activities planned for the excursion, including information about the facilities to be used
- requirements for a parent or guardian to provide permission for the student to participate in the swimming and water activities.

A detailed consent form must be completed by a parent or guardian before a student is allowed to participate in any planned excursion involving water activities.

Appendix 9 Overnight Excursions

While recognising that overnight excursions and camps have significant educational benefits, it is important to be aware that such activities can be disruptive to academic study, both for participating students and for those students whose teachers are supervisors and are therefore absent from school.

It is important to recognise that an overnight excursion places additional financial pressures on parents and schools must endeavour to assist students whose families may be experiencing financial constraints.

In planning overnight excursions and camps, principals and staff need to be conscious of the legal and moral responsibility for student welfare that accompanies such activities. Arrangements for care and supervision must reflect the greater degree of risk to students that overnight excursions and camps present, both in terms of the activities undertaken and the time spent away from home.

When staff organising the excursion or camp have completed the risk assessment, the principal should determine whether or not the levels of risk are acceptable, and grant approval only when they are satisfied that risk levels are acceptable.

Preparation Time and Approval Procedure

When it has been determined there is an educational need for an overnight excursion, the person planning the event must ensure all necessary requirements are met in relation to budget and number of supervising teachers to support the number of students attending.

A formal proposal should be presented to the principal to gain approval before committing the school to the overnight excursion.

Accommodation and bathroom arrangements are to be such that no staff member or adult is placed in a position where there is potential for allegations of improper conduct to be made.

For co-educational groups, male and female supervisors are required.

A comprehensive risk assessment of the overnight excursion is fundamental. The risk assessment should be presented to the principal for approval and sign-off at least one month prior to the event so that additional risk management controls can be applied should the principal be dissatisfied with the levels of risk.

In case of illness, accident or other emergency there must be a plan of action and an agreed notification and communication procedure approved by the principal prior to departure. At least one teacher must have a current acceptable qualification in first aid and all should have undertaken current acceptable CPR training.

Alcohol must not be consumed by teachers or volunteers whilst on the overnight excursion.

Student Behaviour Arrangements need to be in place to facilitate the return to their parents of any student who exhibits behaviour that seriously endangers themselves or others. Written confirmation from parents should be obtained to acknowledge agreement to the arrangements proposed.

Supervision ratio of students to teachers should not exceed 20:1. Circumstances however, may dictate that a lower ratio is required. Where there are more than 20 students involved, there should always be a minimum of 3 teachers. Where there are fewer than 20 students, there must be at least 2 teachers.

Volunteers parents, guardians and carers who accompany overnight excursions should be selected according to the expertise they have relevant to the activities undertaken and must be briefed on arrangements prior to the overnight excursion. Written information should be provided to volunteers including information about their role, hazards that might be encountered and precautions to be taken. Volunteers cannot replace teachers in a supervisory capacity, they should only be engaged in a supporting role.

Schools which undertake overnight excursions must have thoroughly documented school processes to follow and retain all documentation related to each overnight excursion.

Appendix 10 Overseas Excursions

Overseas Excursions are rare and must be planned and budgeted for well in advance to take into consideration cost, school timetable, individual student study plan, and curriculum requirements.

An overseas excursion must have the endorsement of the principal and, when more than one school is involved, the principals of all participating schools. In addition, overseas excursions must be approved by the Executive Director of Schools for the Bathurst Diocese and the Bishop of Bathurst Diocese as per the Delegations Schedule.

Approval for overseas excursions cannot be assumed.

Funds relating to such excursions should not be committed prior to approval being granted.

At least nine months prior to the date of planned departure principals must alert the Executive Director of Schools of their intention to organise an overseas excursion, and seek approval to continue the planning.

Once approval to proceed has been granted by the Executive Director of Schools the principal(s) should prepare all required documentation and Risk Assessments for approval by the Executive Director and Bishop.

Approval will generally only be given for excursions that occur substantially in holiday time.

Overseas travel will not proceed, regardless of the proximity to the date of departure and other organisational matters, if the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has recommended against travel. Advice regarding travel to particular countries is on the DFAT web site at: www.smartraveller.gov.au.

School groups on overseas excursions will register prior to departure with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Register of Australians travelling overseas. See Supporting information on the DFAT website or call 1300 555 135.

A first aid kit must be taken on all overseas excursions and that first aid kit must include asthma medication and spacer, and a general use adrenaline auto injector (i.e. EpiPen®) and an ASCIA action plan general use for the adrenaline auto injector. Principals should check any requirements that countries visited may have in relation to this medication being brought into the country.

Each staff member attending must be currently trained in emergency care, first aid and anaphylaxis, and at least one staff member must be trained in CPR.

Schools which undertake overseas excursions must have thoroughly documented school processes to follow and retain all documentation related to each overseas excursion.